MARVEL
X-FACTOR
HELL ON EARTH WAR
DAVID • KIRK

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PREVIOUSLY:
X-FACTOR FACED OFF AGAINST DEMONIC ENTITIES AND A MYSTIC VOLCANO THAT AROSE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN. THEY MANAGED TO SHUT IT DOWN, BUT NOT BEFORE HALF A DOZEN MYSTERIOUS BEINGS WERE LAUNCHED FROM THE VOLCANO INTO OUR WORLD.

#250
YARDIN

PLEASE, GOD... IF YOU CAN HEAR THIS...
...IF YOU ARE PAYING ATTENTION TO ANYTHING THAT IS HAPPENING ON THIS WORLD...
...IF YOU EVEN EXIST ANYMORE...
PLEASE LISTEN TO ME.
PLEASE *HELP* ME.
PLEASE PREVENT THIS TERRIBLE THING FROM HAPPENING.
PLEASE TELL THE *HELL LORDS* THAT THIS GREAT BATTLE MUST NOT TRANSPIRE.
THAT THIS... THIS MASSIVE WAR OVER THEIR OWN EGOS CAN...*WILL*... LAY WASTE TO EVERYTHING.
TELL THEM TO GO BACK TO THEIR NEUTRAL CORNERS. TELL THEM YOU HAVE DECIDED THIS INSANITY ENDS BEFORE IT BEGINS.
TELL THEM ALL THIS. I'M *BEGGING* YOU.
OKAY, FINE.
I'LL DO IT *MYSELF*.

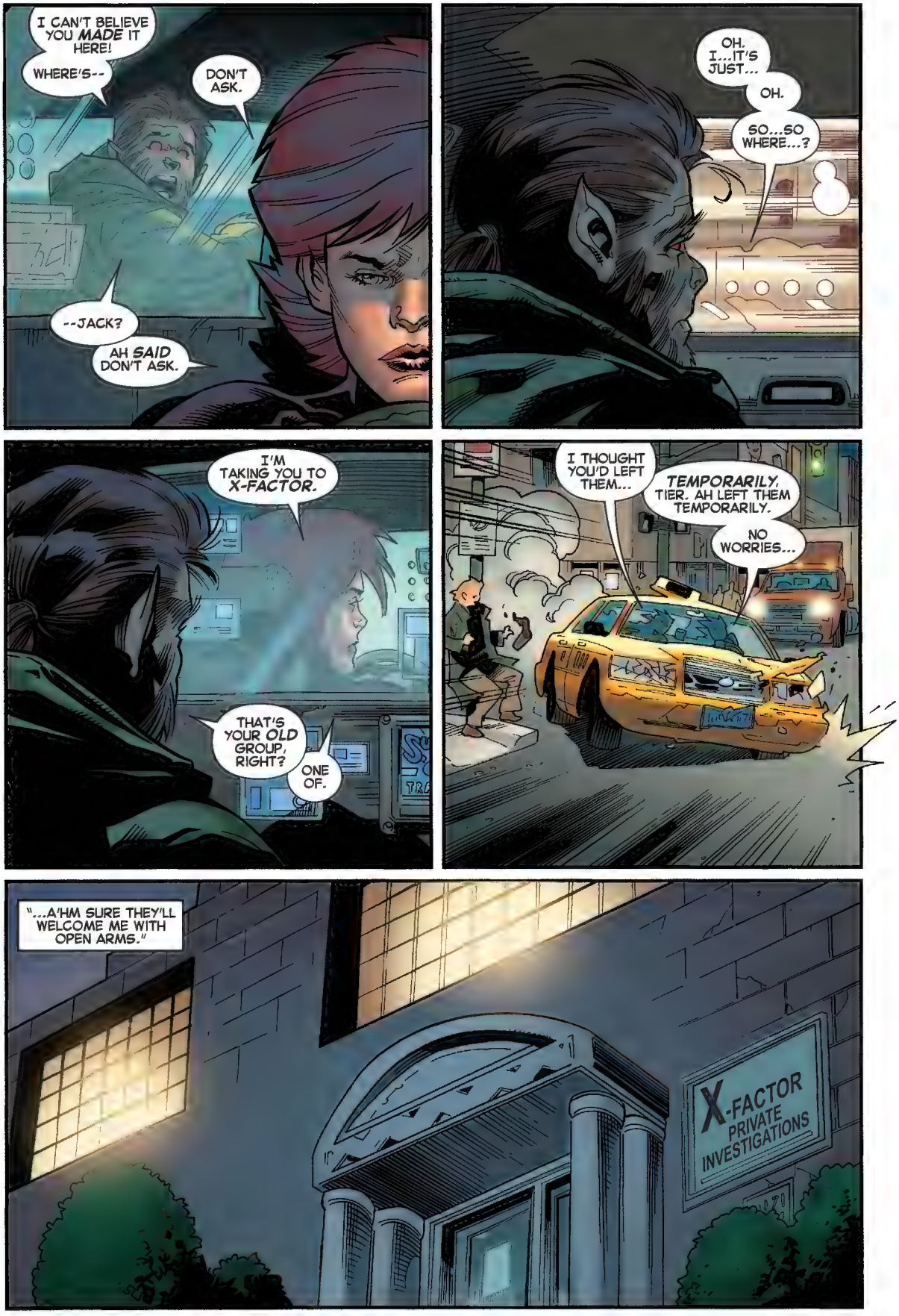
HELL ON EARTH WAR
MY NAME IS TIER. I'M ONLY A FEW MONTHS OLD, BUT I'M ALREADY AS FUNCTIONAL AS AN AVERAGE TWELVE YEAR OLD.
AND THESE DAYS I FEEL LIKE WHEREVER I'M GOING, THERE ARE PEOPLE CHASING ME WHO WANT TO KILL ME OR EAT ME OR BOTH.
I HATE IT. I HATE THIS LIFE OF MINE.
IT JUST...IT SUCKS, THAT'S ALL. IT SUCKS THAT IT'S SO WRONG...
...AND THERE'S NOT A DAMNED THING I CAN DO TO CHANGE IT.
SORRY. SHOULDN'T SAY "DAMNED." NOT SURE MY MOM WOULD BE THRILLED.
TASHIBO
KIRK
BRIEFS
LEISTEN
KETCHUM
KETCHUP
MILLA
SHOE
1500

I WISH I COULD STOP THINKING ABOUT MOM.
I MEAN, FIRST SHE SHOVED ME ASIDE, AND THEN SHE CAME BACK.
AND THEN...
SCREW IT.
"GET TO X-FACTOR." THAT'S THE LAST THING SHE SAID BEFORE SHE WAS CARRIED OFF INTO A FIGHT. "I'LL MEET YOU THERE," SHE SAID.
YEAH. THAT WAS CONVINCING.
I SHOULD JUST GO TO THEM.
I THINK THAT TRAIN THERE SHOULD GET ME TO THEM.
N Q R W S
DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY AT THE MOMENT, BUT THAT SHOULDN'T BE A PROBL--
WHOA!!!
RELAX, SON. I'LL HELP YOU UP.
S'OKAY. I'LL BE FINE...

NO. NO, IT CAN'T BE.
NOT DARWIN. NOT NOW.
SORRY, TIER...
YOU WON'T BE FINE THIS TIME.
THIS TIME, IT ENDS. THIS TIME, YOU'RE DONE.
OKAY, FINE!
YOU'VE BEEN CHASING ME SINCE I WAS BORN! WAVING YOUR GUN AT ME! SAYING YOU HAVE TO KILL ME!
SO JUST... JUST DO IT ALREADY! KILL ME!
KILL ME!

I...I WILL.
DO IT, I SAID!
I...
MY GOD...HE... HE CAN'T PULL THE TRIGGER.
HE CAN'T PULL IT!
MAYBE...MAYBE THIS WHOLE THING OF HIS... CHASING ME...
...MAYBE IT CAN BE SOLVED SOME OTHER WAY THAN BLOWING MY BRAINS OUT.
MAYBE...
WHUMP
OH.
OKAY, WELL THAT WORKS, TOO.

GET IN!!
MOM! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!
FOR NOW. HOLD ON!
UNHHH...
TAXI
NYC TAXI
1701
CHUNK
KA-CHUNK
OW.


I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MADE IT HERE!
WHERE'S--
DON'T ASK.
--JACK?
AH SAID DON'T ASK.
OH. I...IT'S JUST...
OH.
SO...SO WHERE...?
I'M TAKING YOU TO X-FACTOR.
THAT'S YOUR OLD GROUP, RIGHT?
ONE OF.
I THOUGHT YOU'D LEFT THEM...
TEMPORARILY, TIER. AH LEFT THEM TEMPORARILY.
NO WORRIES...
"...A'HM SURE THEY'LL WELCOME ME WITH OPEN ARMS."
X-FACTOR PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS

REALLY. WELL, GOOD RIDDANCE.
I'VE LEFT!! AND IT'S ALL MONET'S FAULT -PIP
MONET, FOR GOD'S SAKE--!
HE LEAPED INTO MY HEAD, MADROX! DO YOU GET THAT? INTO MY HEAD!
NOBODY DOES THAT! NOBODY!
SO YES, I TOLD PIP I'D BEAT THE HELL OUT OF HIM IF HE STAYED AROUND!
SHOULD I THREATEN YOU NEXT?
OKAY, THAT'S ENOUGH.
STAY OUT OF IT, LAYLA...
YOU'RE THREATENING MY HUSBAND, SO I'M KIND OF IN IT. NOW BACK OFF.
MADROX. RAHNE IS HERE. RAHNE AND HER KID.
SHE'S ASKING FOR YOU, AND SHE SEEMS RATHER FRANTIC.
OKAY, THEN. MONET, WE DISCUSS THIS LATER.
LOOKING FORWARD TO IT.

AND DARWIN'S BEEN TRYING TO KILL YOU ALL THIS TIME? BUT...IT MAKES NO SENSE.
MAKES SENSE TO ME. I GOT IN HIS WAY WHEN HE WAS GUNNING FOR TIER A COUPLE MONTHS AGO. HE NEARLY KILLED ME, TOO.
LOOK, I DUNNO WHAT'S GOING ON WITH DARWIN. I HAVEN'T SINCE VEGAS.
BUT IF YOU NEED A PLACE TO STAY...AND EVEN A TEAM TO JOIN...
...THEN WELCOME BACK TO X-FACTOR, RAHNE. AND TIER.
OOOOOFF!
HE'S EVERYTHING SHE SAID HE'D BE, AND MORE BESIDES.
ALL THIS TIME WE'VE BEEN RUNNING, AND NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT--
UH-OH.

DOWN!!
SECONDS LATER AND BULLETS ARE FLYING, AND I THINK, "THIS IS IT. HERE WE THOUGHT WE'D BE SAFE AND SUDDENLY, BOOM, HE'S AFTER ME AGAIN.
"AND THIS TIME HE'S NOT GOING TO HESITATE."
EH?
TAKE HIM!

HE'S TAKEN!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THESE ARE THE FINAL MOMENTS!
HE HAS TO DIE NOW! OTHERWISE IT'S ABOUT TO START!
YOU KNOW IT! BECAUSE YOU SAW THE CREATURES ARRIVE ON EARTH THROUGH THE VOLCANO!
WAIT! HOLD IT! SHATTERSTAR, GET OFF HIM!
I SAID LEGGO, STAR!
I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING, MADRAAAAAAARRHH!
CRASH

I GAVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE REASON. YOU WERE MY BROTHERS IN ARMS...
...KNOW THAT I TAKE NO PLEASURE IN THIS.
BUT WHEN ENDING ONE LIFE CAN SAVE SEVEN BILLION...
...I HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE.
YOU LITTLE--
NO.
MADROX--!
I SAID "NO"!
DARWIN...
I TRUST YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE.
DO WHAT YOU GOTTA DO.

NO!
LAYLA. REIN HER IN.
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THIS, JAMIE...
UNFFFF!
I'M SUSPECTING I AM...
BECAUSE DARWIN STILL HASN'T SHOT HIM. HAVE YOU.
I--
AND YOU'RE NOT GONNA.
MADROX KEEPS TALKING, FAST AS HE CAN, AND DARWIN DOESN'T NOTICE THE MADROX DUPE SNEAKING UP ON HIM.
IT'S ALL A DISTRACTION TO KEEP DARWIN'S ATTENTION FIXED.
ALL HE NEEDS IS ANOTHER COUPLE OF SECONDS AND...
BLAAM

OR NOT.
DAMN IT.
GOD HELP ME, I CAN'T DO IT. I CAN'T...
AND NOW IT'S TOO LATE.
DARWIN, WHAT ARE YOU T--
OH GOD. NOW WHAT?

HEY THERE.
MIND IF I TAKE A STAB AT IT?
I HEAR THE COLLECTIVE GASPS FROM AROUND ME. THEY APPEAR ASTOUNDED TO SEE THIS INDIVIDUAL.
WELL, MOST OF THEM ARE ASTOUNDED. ONE'S JUST PISSED.
GUIDO!
NICE TO SEE YA TOO, MONET.
OOOOOOFFF!

INSTANTLY THEY LEAP INTO ACTION.
AND THIS NEW GUY, THIS...THIS STRONG GUY...
HE SLAPS LONGSHOT'S KNIVES AROUND LIKE THEY'RE NOTHING.
LIKE THEY'RE *ALL* NOTHING.
GUIDO! WE'RE WASTING TIME HERE.
KILL THE KID *NOW!*

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
JEZEBEL. NOW GET OUT OF THE WAY.
I'M THINKING NO, ACTUALLY.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. TIER HAS TO DIE--
YEAH, WELL, WE HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT.
NOT HAPPENING!
YOU DON'T GET TO. STEP ASIDE--
LISTEN, YOU--!
KROOM
OH, WELL. CRAP.
NOW WHAT?
IT'S TOO LATE. WE WAITED TOO LONG.
HERE! GET OVER HERE! RIGHT NOW!!!
DO AS SHE SAYS!
WHY?
BECAUSE SHE SAID SO, AND RIGHT NOW THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH!

I'LL KILL HIM!
I'LL KILL HIM, AND THEN I'LL GET LAYLA TO BRING HIM BACK TO LIFE AGAIN AND KILL HIM ALL OVER AG--
WH-WHAT...?
MY NAME IS TIER. I'M ONLY A FEW MONTHS OLD, BUT I'M ALREADY AS FUNCTIONAL AS AN AVERAGE TWELVE YEAR OLD.
X-FACTOR PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON, OR WHY SO MANY PEOPLE ARE OUT TO KILL ME.
BUT AS THE WORLD TURNS WHITE AROUND US, I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL...

...AS IF I'M ABOUT TO FIND OUT.
SO, MY DAUGHTER I SEE YOU FOUND THE BOY FIRST.
BRAVA TO YOU, CHILD.
IT ISN'T THAT SIMPLE, FATHER.
SOMETIMES, CHILD, IT TRULY IS. DO YOU NOT AGREE, GUIDO?
OH YEAH. FER SURE.
IS...IS THAT...?
MEPHISTO. UNDERWORLD LORD.
CAN YOU GET US OUT OF HERE?
I DIDN'T GET US INTO HERE, SO NOT REALLY, NO.
SO. THE DAY HAS FINALLY COME.

LET ONE OF US KILL TIER AND GET THIS WAR OVER WITH.

#251

UNHHH...
WH-WHAT...? WHERE...?
HUH?
WHERE ARE THEY?
MONET? I...I DON'T...
WHERE?!
I DON'T KNOW! OKAY? I BARELY KNOW WHERE I AM!
THIS HAPPENED BECAUSE OF YOU, DARWIN!
MONET, YOU'RE WAY STRONGER THAN I AM, BUT I SWEAR TO GOD, IF YOU DON'T STOP YANKING ME AROUND, I'M...
LOOK!
OH... HOLY CRAP.
YEAH. THAT'S RIGHT. HOLY CRAP. NOW...

KEEPING IN MIND THAT ALL MY STUFF WAS IN THERE...
...AND KEEPING IN MIND THAT I SET GREAT STORE BY MY STUFF...
I'D START TALKING FAST IF I WERE YOU.
X-FACTOR
PRIVATE
INVESTIGATIONS

GET OUT OF MY FACE!
UNNNNFFFF!
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I COULD KILL YOU.
WHERE YOU STAND.
WITH NO PROBLEM.
AFTER TOUCHING HELA, I BECAME A DEATH GOD. I CAN SEE HOW TO TAKE YOU APART, DISSECT YOU INTO PIECES.
SO I WOULD STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT YOU KEEP YOUR DISTANCE AND STOP THREATENING ME.
BECAUSE OTHERWISE I--
YOU'LL WHAT?!
C'MON, DARWIN! WHAT'LL YOU DO, HUH?
IMPRESS ME! FRIGHTEN ME! SCARE ME!
I DARE YOU TO DO YOUR WORST!

DEVIL'S TOWER, WYOMING.

MY NAME IS TIER. I'M STILL UNCLEAR ON MANY THINGS IN MY LIFE.

THINGS LIKE HOW I WAS BORN. *WHY* I WAS BORN. ALL THAT GOOD STUFF.

EXCEPT NOW I'M SURROUNDED BY A BUNCH OF SUPER HEROES CALLED *X-FACTOR*, AND THEY IN TURN ARE SURROUNDED BY A BUNCH OF...

...I DUNNO... WEIRDOS FROM OTHER DIMENSIONS...

...AND ALL THEY SEEM TO CARE ABOUT IS *KILLING ME*. AT LEAST ONE OF THEM SAID SO...

...AND I DON'T HEAR ANYONE ELSE *COMPLAINING*.

OKAY, EVERYBODY JUST HOLD IT! NO ONE IS KILLING ANYBODY!
AND I DON'T CARE HOW BIG OR OMINOUS YOU GUYS ARE!
BECAUSE, HEY, YOU CAN TALK ABOUT KILLING TIER ALL YOU WANT, BUT WHILE WE'RE INSIDE THIS SHIELD--
NNAAHH--!
NOW THEN...
ONE SIDE, OAF!
TIER, GET READY TO GO.
WHERE?

WHAT IN THE--?
YOU HAVE MANY OTHER THINGS TO CONCERN YOURSELVES OVER!
AS DO YOU.
UNNNNFFFFFF!
AH!
THE BOY IS MINE TO DESTROY!

STAY CLOSE!
BUT WON'T THEY--?
SHUT UP AND STAY CLO--
GIVE HIM TO ME.
BITE ME.
IT'S YOUR LAST CHANCE, MADROX.
BLAM BLAM BLAM
NO!
IT'S YOURS!!

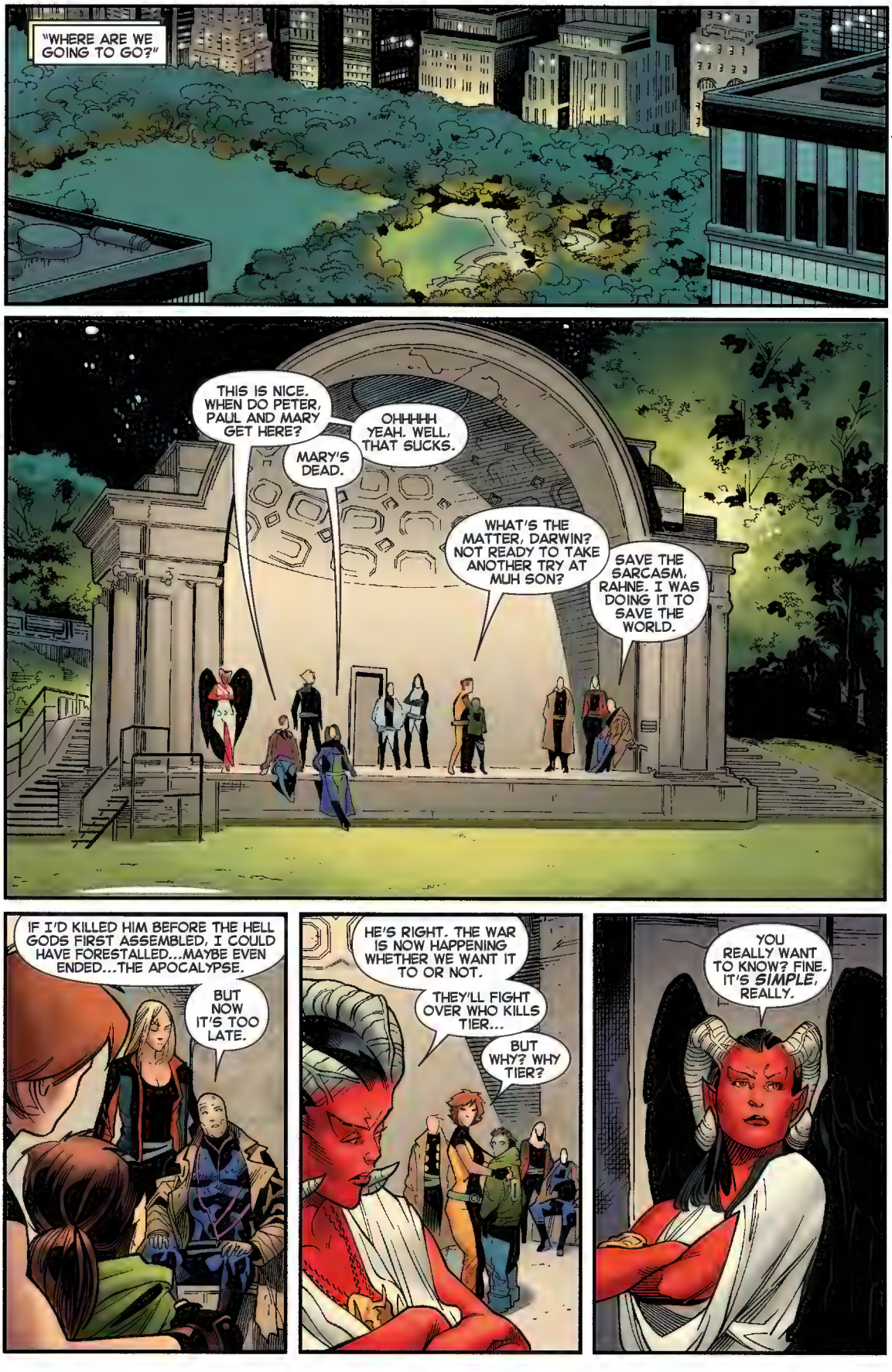
ENOUGH!
NO! NO!!!
MOMMMMM!!
NOOOO!
YES.
THIS ENDS NOW.
AAAAAARRRRRRR!
SCHLUK

WHAT?
SCHLP
I'M SORRY. I'M...I'M SO SORRY, FATHER.
I THOUGHT IT COINCIDENCE THAT YOU WERE WITH THEM. I BELIEVED YOU WERE TRYING TO SOFTEN THEM UP.
BUT I WAS WRONG. YOU AND GUIDO... YOU'VE TURNED AGAINST M--
WHOA, HOLD THE PHONE! I WAS HANGING WITH HER 'CAUSE SHE WAS THE BOSS'S DAUGHTER.
ME, I'M STILL ON YOUR SIDE!

WE HAVE TO GO! NOW!
BUT... BUT WHAT ABOUT--
HANG ON!
MY CREW--!
I SAID HANG ON!
BLOOD AND THUNDER!
MEPHISTO! THIS WAS YOUR DAUGHTER'S DOING--!
DO YOU THINK FOR A MOMENT, PLUTO, THAT I AM UNAWARE OF THAT?
WE MUST FIND THEM! AND HER! ESPECIALLY HER!

HUH?!
WHAT? WHERE--
OH MY GOD. THIS WAS OUR HQ, RIGHT?
=KOFF= =KOFF=
YOU!
TELL US WHY THIS IS HAPPENING, OR GOD HELP ME...
I TRIED TO STOP THIS! TRIED TO END THIS WAR BEFORE IT BEGAN. BUT I FAILED AND NOW ALL WE CAN DO IS TRY TO GET AWAY.
AWAY? FROM WHOM? THE GUY YOU STUCK YOUR SWORD INTO?
YES, OKAY? MY DAD, THE HELL LORD WHO WANTS TO KILL THAT KID OVER THERE!
THEY ALL WANT TO KILL THAT KID AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO TO STOP THEM!
YOU'RE BACK.

WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?
MONET, THANK GOD. WHERE'S DARWIN?
HE'S WHAT I OCCUPIED MYSELF WITH WHILE WAITING FOR YOU TO COME BACK.
I HEAR SIRENS IN THE DISTANCE. IT'D PROBABLY BE BETTER FOR US NOT TO BE HERE WHEN THEY ARRIVE.
WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS LATER, M.
LAYLA? IS HE OKAY TO TRAVEL?
CHECKING. DARWIN?
DO YOU KNOW?
WHAT?
DO YOU KNOW...THAT SHE'S DYING? I STOPPED ATTACKING WHEN I FELT IT. LET HER POUND AWAY ON ME. DO YOU KNOW? ABOUT HER?
YES.
LAYLA!
I SAID, "YES," JAMIE. HE CAN TRAVEL. WE'RE COMING. ONLY QUESTION IS:


"WHERE ARE WE GOING TO GO?"
THIS IS NICE. WHEN DO PETER, PAUL AND MARY GET HERE?
MARY'S DEAD.
OHHHHH YEAH. WELL, THAT SUCKS.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, DARWIN? NOT READY TO TAKE ANOTHER TRY AT MUH SON?
SAVE THE SARCASM, RAHNE. I WAS DOING IT TO SAVE THE WORLD.
IF I'D KILLED HIM BEFORE THE HELL GODS FIRST ASSEMBLED, I COULD HAVE FORESTALLED...MAYBE EVEN ENDED...THE APOCALYPSE.
BUT NOW IT'S TOO LATE.
HE'S RIGHT. THE WAR IS NOW HAPPENING WHETHER WE WANT IT TO OR NOT.
THEY'LL FIGHT OVER WHO KILLS TIER...
BUT WHY? WHY TIER?
YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW? FINE. IT'S SIMPLE, REALLY.

"FOR CENTURY UPON CENTURY IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE WORLD, THE HELL LORDS FOUGHT, BATTLING EACH OTHER FOR DOMINANCE.
"THEY AMASSED DEMONIC ARMIES TO BATTLE ONE ANOTHER... COLLECTED SOULS THAT WOULD GIVE THEM *POWER*...
"POWER THAT WOULD ENABLE THEM...SO THEY THOUGHT... TO BECOME THE DOMINANT HELL LORD IN THE UNIVERSE.
"ON AND ON IT WENT, WITH NO END IN SIGHT. AND THEN...

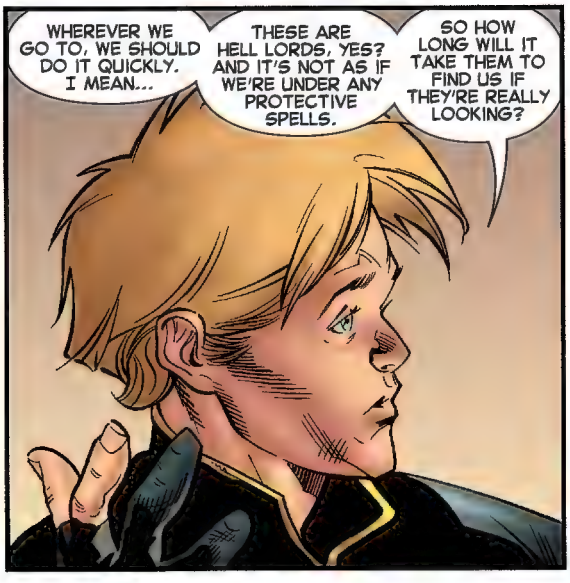
"...CERTAIN HIGHLY PLACED INDIVIDUALS...
"...GREW TIRED OF THE BATTLE.
"REALIZING THE COSTLY WAR WOULD WAGE ON WITHOUT END, A HIGHER POWER INTERVENED AND AN EDICT WAS ISSUED. IT WAS QUITE SIMPLE, REALLY:
"WHEN THE SEVEN BILLIONTH PERSON WALKED THE EARTH, THEN--AND ONLY THEN--WOULD THE HELL LORDS ENTER INTO THEIR FINAL BATTLE.
"THE RESOLUTION OF THAT BATTLE WOULD BE SIMPLE:
"WHOEVER KILLED THE SEVEN BILLIONTH INDIVIDUAL ON EARTH WOULD BE THE WINNER.
"THE VARIED HELL LORDS WOULD HOLD ONTO THEIR INDIVIDUAL DOMAINS, BUT ONLY ONE WOULD BE IN CHARGE OF ALL OF THEM.
"HIS OR HER OR ITS RULE WOULD BE SUPREME, AND ALL OTHERS WOULD BOW TO HIM, OR HER, OR IT."

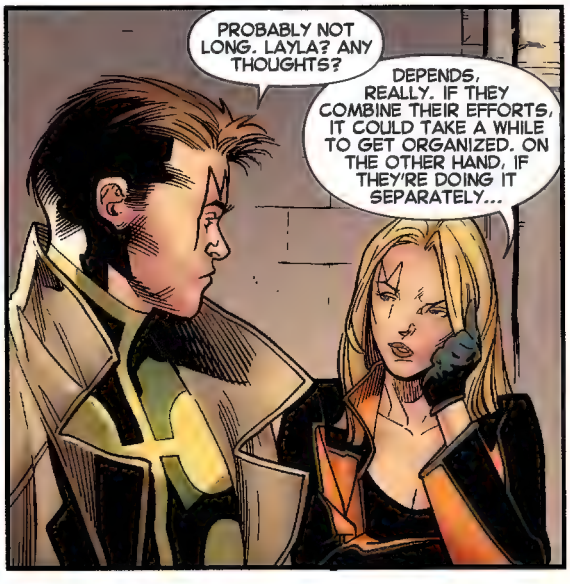
AND THE SEVEN BILLIONTH PERSON NOW WALKS THE EARTH...
...AND SOMEONE'S GOING TO KILL HIM SO THEY CAN RULE OVER ALL THE HELLS.
THAT'S ABSURD!
I DINNA BELIEVE ONE WORD YE--
I DROVE THIS THROUGH MY FATHER. HE SURVIVED.
YOU WON'T BE SO LUCKY.
OKAY, THAT'S ENOUGH! THELMA, LOUISE, NEUTRAL CORNERS, NOW!

LOOK, WE'RE CLEARLY IN OVER OUR HEADS HERE. WE NEED HELP.
WE NEED TO GET TO THE AVENGERS.
OH, RIGHT. BECAUSE THEY ALWAYS HAVE THE RIGHT ANSWER.

THE ONES WE REALLY NEED TO GET TO ARE THE X-MEN. WOLVERINE AND HIS CREW.
RIGHT. BECAUSE CALLING THE AVENGERS WOULD MEAN CALLING ALEX, AND WE COULDN'T HAVE THAT.

THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ALEX! I JUST...
WE'RE MUTANTS. SO WE SHOULD GO TO MUTANTS FOR HELP.


WHEREVER WE GO TO, WE SHOULD DO IT QUICKLY. I MEAN...
THESE ARE HELL LORDS, YES? AND IT'S NOT AS IF WE'RE UNDER ANY PROTECTIVE SPELLS.
SO HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE THEM TO FIND US IF THEY'RE REALLY LOOKING?


PROBABLY NOT LONG. LAYLA? ANY THOUGHTS?
DEPENDS, REALLY. IF THEY COMBINE THEIR EFFORTS, IT COULD TAKE A WHILE TO GET ORGANIZED. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THEY'RE DOING IT SEPARATELY...

AH.
THERE YOU ARE.
FALL BACK, ALL OF YOU!
FOOL.
WAAAMM

AWAY.
MY ARM! HE...
...HE BROKE MY ARM.
THE LONGER YOU STAND UP FOR THIS BOY...
...THE MORE INCIDENTS SUCH AS THIS ONE WILL OCCUR.
GIVE ME THE BOY.
NOW.

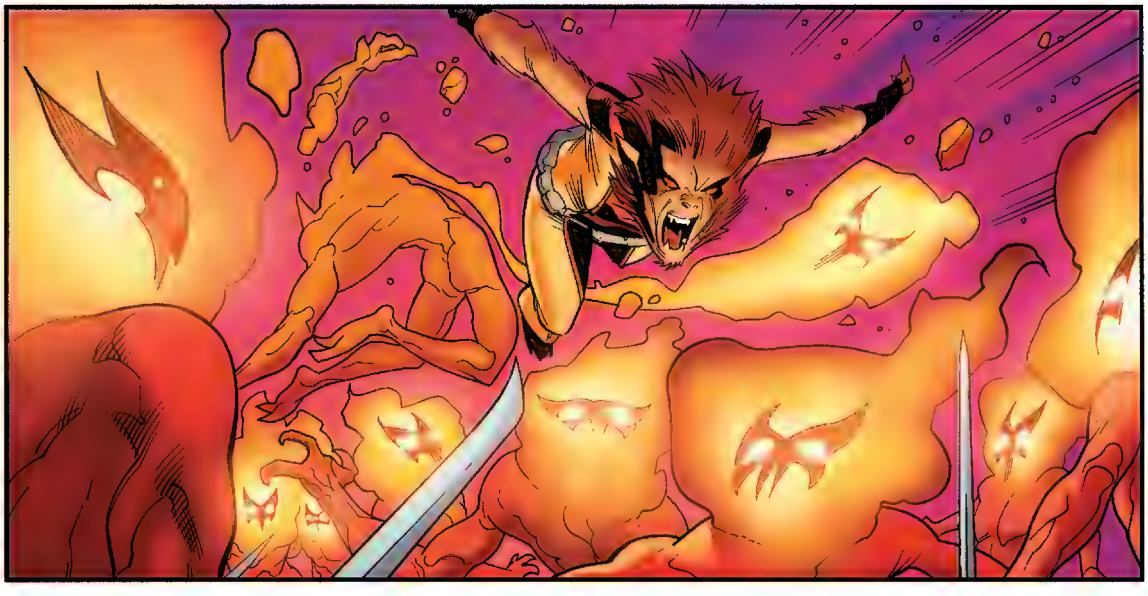
#252
JARDIN

MY NAME IS TIER. AND I'VE JUST SEEN SHATTERSTAR GET *CUT DOWN* BY PLUTO.
AND I CAN FEEL ANOTHER BIT OF SANITY SLIPPING AWAY FROM ME. IT MAKES ME WONDER...
WHAT'S GONNA BE LEFT WHEN, AND IF, THIS IS OVER?

THIS IS YOUR ONE AND ONLY CHANCE, MORTALS.
EVEN NOW, MY FELLOW HELL LORDS HAVE SPREAD OUT, LOOKING FOR YOU.
BUT I FOUND YOU FIRST. SO BEFORE ANY OF THEM SHOW UP TO TRY AND HORN IN--
EH?
NICE SWORD.
METAL.
MINE.
MADROX?
GET THEM!!

MY MOTHER PUSHES ME AND WHISPERS, "STAY DOWN" IN MY EAR.
SHE WANTS TO SHIELD ME. SHE WANTS ME TO GROW UP UNINFLUENCED BY THE VIOLENCE THAT WAS SO MUCH A PART OF *HER* LIFE.
IT'S MOMENTS LIKE THESE...

...THAT MAKE ME WONDER IF SHE'S PLAYING WITH A FULL DECK.



IT'S AMAZING TO SEE WHAT MADROX CAN DO SINGLE-HANDEDLY...ASSUMING THAT SUCH A PHRASE EVEN *MEANS* ANYTHING TO HIM.
AND RICTOR...USING HIS EARTHQUAKE POWERS TO RIP OPEN THE EARTH...
THEN THERE'S LONGSHOT, FLINGING EVERY KNIFE OF HIS WITH HYPER-ACCURACY. HE'D LIKELY SAY THAT IT'S JUST LUCK, BUT I THINK EVERYONE KNOWS IT'S MORE THAN THAT.
AS FOR MONET, NATURALLY SHE GOES STRAIGHT FOR THE MAIN MAN...OR WHATEVER HE IS.

AND THEN THERE'S MY MOTHER, RAHNE SINCLAIR, STILL A CHILD HERSELF, REALLY, CUTTING THROUGH ANY AND EVERYTHING THAT'S IN HER W--
NO. OH MY GOD...
MOM! WATCH OUT!
BLAAAAM

WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?
FRANKLY, DARWIN? AH EXPECTED YE TO LEAVE ME T'DIE.
IT'S LIKE I TOLD MONET: THERE'S NO STOPPING IT NOW. SO THE ONLY THING I HAVE LEFT IS TRYING TO HELP.
IT CANNA BE THAT SIMPLE.
SOMETIMES, RAHNE, IT REALLY CA--
RA-KOOM
TIER! WHERE'S MUH SON--?!
I...I DON'T THINK HE'S THE MAIN PROBLEM RIGHT NOW.

POOR LITTLE GIRL. THINKING YOU COULD TAKE ON A HELL LORD.
UNHHH!
YOU MAY THINK YOU'RE NOT HUMAN, BUT REALLY, YOU'RE MERELY A STEP OR TWO ABOVE YOUR STATION...
...AND YOU SHOULD REALLY NOT BE EXCHANGING BLOWS...
...WITH YOUR BETTERS.
UNFFFFF!!!
PLUTO!!!!

GOT SOME STUFF FOR YA!
THANK YOU.
NOW...LET'S PUT AN END TO THIS.
THE ONLY REASON YOU HELD ON TO THIS UNEARTHLY METAL IS BECAUSE LADY ST. CROIX DISTRACTED ME FOR AS LONG AS SHE DID.
WITHOUT HER CONTRIBUTIONS...
THNK
...YOU'RE MUCH EASIER TO DEAL WITH.

X-FACTOR, REGROUP! BRING YOURSELVES AROUND THE--
ENOUGH!
AND THEN IT ALL COMES APART.
JAMIE!!!!
PLUTO GOES BERSERK, HIS POWER SPREADING EVERYWHERE.
THEY'RE ALL THROWN AROUND LIKE LEMMINGS.

NONE OF US CAN SLOW HIM OR STOP HIM IN ANY WAY. MADROX IS GONE AND JEZEBEL HAS VANISHED AS WELL.
EVERYONE ELSE IS EITHER DOWN OR OUT COMPLETELY.

WHERE IS THE BOY? ONLY HIS DEATH WILL SETTLE THIS!
I MUST--
I SNAP.
I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE. I CANNOT ACCEPT THE DEATHS OF OTHERS IN ORDER TO TRY AND SAVE ME.
IT HAS TO STOP.
PLUTO SEES ME. HIS MOUTH TWISTS BACK IN A SMILE.
SOMEWHERE MY MOTHER SCREAMS MY NAME.
SOMEWHERE OFF TO THE SIDE, POLARIS SHOUTS IT AS WELL. TELLS ME TO BACK OFF.
I IGNORE THEM BOTH.

THE AIR OF THE SWORD HISSES PAST ME. I'M BEYOND ITS REACH. BUT PLUTO...
...ISN'T BEYOND MINE.
HE KNOCKS ME ASIDE, BUT IT'S A DESPERATE MOVE, CONTACT MADE LUCKY.
I LEAP BACK UPON HIM, LAND ON HIS CHEST...
THE CHEST PLATE RIPS OFF. I HOWL...

AND THEN...
...THEN MY MIND GOES BLANK...
...AND I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS FOR THE NEXT FEW MINUTES.
AAWROOOO

NNN--*
WELL.
THAT WAS A HELLUVA THING.

PLUTO IS...
...DEAD. DEAD AT THE HANDS OF...TIER.
IT IS TRUE, THEN.
THE SEVEN BILLIONTH PERSON WALKING THIS WORLD CAN KILL US.
SO IT WOULD APPEAR.
"APPEAR" IS THE IMPORTANT WORD.
PLUTO, EVEN NOW, IS REMATERIALIZING DOWN IN HIS WORLD, NONE THE WORSE.
EXCEPT THAT HIS PARTICIPATION IN THIS CONTEST IS OVER. ALL HE CAN DO FOR NOW IS WATCH FROM THE SIDELINES.
"FOR NOW." I DO NOT TRUST HIM FOR "LATER" ANY MORE THAN I TRUST ANY OF YOU.
IT IS RELATIVELY OBVIOUS WHAT MUST BE DONE.
OH, REALLY? AND WHAT EXACTLY WOULD THAT BE?
MY DEAR SATANNISH...WE UNLEASH THE GATES OF HELL UPON THEM...

...AND EACH OTHER!
THE TIME FOR GAMESMANSHIP IS PAST!
THE BOY ISN'T COOPERATING! NEITHER, THEN, AM I!
AND NONE OF YOU SHOULD BE AS WELL!
OUR FINAL WAR HAS NOW TRULY BEGUN!

X-FACTOR, LOOK SHARP! WE CAN'T STAY HERE. GET READY TO MOVE!
JAMIE? OH GOD, JAMIE...
MOM--?
MUH DEAR BOY...
STAR, YOUR ARM IS BROKEN! ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN--?
IT WILL BE FINE! HOLD ON!
X-FACTOR! MOVE OUT!
NO. WHERE'S JAMIE? WE CAN'T LEAVE WITHOUT HIM.
OH MUH GOD.
THE SKIES... THEY'RE... IT'S...

"...IT'S BLEEDING."

IS EVERYONE OKAY?
SOUND OFF!
WE'RE FINE, POLARIS. CALM DOWN.
JAMIE. WHERE IS HE?!
WE CAN'T LEAVE JAMIE BEHIND!
WE HAVE TO GO BACK!
LAYLA, NOT FOR AN HOUR, AT LEAST! I DON'T HAVE THE ENERGY TO--
TAKE US BACK!
I CAN'T!
JAMIE!!!

JEZEBEL. MY DEAR, SWEET LITTLE GIRL.
WHUU--?
SO MUCH TO TALK ABOUT. UNFORTUNATELY, DUTY CALLS. I HAVE HELL LORDS TO DESTROY.
BUT IN THE MEANTIME...
...I HAVE SOMEONE TO KEEP AN EYE ON YOU.

#253

WH-WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MADROX?!
I HAD TO DO SOMETHING, DID I NOT? AFTER YOUR BETRAYAL...
I DIDN'T BETRAY YOU. I JUST--
DON'T SPEAK TO ME, MEPHISTA! NOT A WORD! NOT A SYLLABLE!
OH, BUT THAT'S RIGHT. NOT "MEPHISTA." YOU PREFER "JEZEBEL" NOW.
YOU SLUMBER FOR YEARS AND WHEN I MANAGE TO AWAKEN YOU, YOU SUDDENLY CONCERN YOURSELF WITH AFFAIRS OF MORTALS!
CARE TO EXPLAIN WHY?
BECAUSE SOMEONE HAS TO CARE ABOUT HUMANITY IN ALL THIS. OBVIOUSLY YOU'RE NOT GOING TO...
SO I GUESS IT'S UP TO PEOPLE BORN OF MORTALS... LIKE ME.
WATCH HER.
YESSSSSSS...
AND DON'T HISS. IT ANNOYS ME.
YES.
YOU CAN'T KEEP TRYING TO KILL A CHILD TO DECIDE WHO'S GOING TO BE RULER OF ALL THE HELLS!
I AGREE.
THAT'S WHY WE'RE JUST GOING TO ASSAIL EACH OTHER AND SEE HOW IT COMES OUT.
OH. WELL... CRAP.

THE SKY IS BLEEDING. IT'S JUST...
...IT'S LIKE IT'S SPLITTING APART.
RAHNE SINCLAIR, MY MOTHER, PULLS ME CLOSE AND STARES AT IT WITH HER EYES WIDE, AN EXPRESSION MIRRORED ON THE REST OF X-FACTOR.
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?
IT HAS TO DO WITH THE HELL GODS. THAT'S FOR DAMNED SURE.
WE HAVE TO SHUT IT DOWN.
GOOD IDEA. HOW?
NO IDEA, STAR. HONESTLY, I WAS HOPING YOU KNEW.

WHY ARE WE DISCUSSING THIS WHEN JAMIE IS MISSING? WE HAVE TO GO AFTER HIM!
YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO NEW YORK TO FIND HIM? BE MY GUEST.
EXCEPT I DOUBT YOU'LL FIND HIM. WHICH YOU PROBABLY KNOW.
NO, I DON'T, MONET. I KNOW STUFF, NOT EVERYTHING.
AND CONSIDERING PLUTO WAS SMACKING YOU AROUND, I WOULDN'T BE SO QUICK TO TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT HOW THEY SHOULD BEHAVE.
HE WASN'T SMACKING ME AROUND.
HE SO WAS.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE--
MONET?
FANTASTIC.
SHATTERSTAR, PICK HER UP. LET'S GET HER OUT OF HERE.

AND TAKE HER WHERE, LORNA? TAKE US WHERE?
DO WE REALLY HAVE TIME FOR GUESSING?
I DON'T KNOW, RAHNE. KINDA MAKING THIS UP AS I GO.
NO, WE DON'T, BUT I DON'T SEE US AS HAVING ANY KIND OF CHOICES.
I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE SKY IS BLEEDING.
GO FOR IT.
IF I HAD TO GUESS...
IT'S THE BEGINNING OF DIMENSIONAL RIFTS.
YOU MEAN IT'S...WHAT? SPLITTING APART DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS?
NO. I'M TALKING ABOUT HELL DIMENSIONS. THE DIFFERENT REALMS RULED BY EACH OF THE HELL LORDS.
THE DIMENSIONS ARE STARTING TO BLEED TOGETHER. THE SEPARATIONS ARE SLOWLY DISSOLVING.
AND IT WILL LIKELY SPEED UP THE LONGER IT GOES.
BUT WHY?
WHY DO YOU THINK, LONGSHOT?

"THE DEMONS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS WAR TO START FOR WHO-KNOWS-HOW-LONG.
"AND NOW THAT IT'S FINALLY HERE...
"NOTHING IS GOING TO KEEP THEM APART FROM EACH OTHER...

"NOT EVEN THE DESPERATE EFFORTS OF EVERY SUPERBEING ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH."

SO WHAT WE REALLY NEED IS A DEFINITE PLAN. I REALLY ONLY SEE ONE:
WE TAKE THE FIGHT TO THE HELL LORDS.
WITH TIER. HE CAN KILL THEM. LET'S USE THAT.
WITH WHAT?
HAD A FEELING YOU'D SAY THAT.
AND WHY SHOULDN'T SHE?
I THINK I SAY SO, RICTOR. THEY'RE HUNTING ME TOO, REMEMBER.
WHO SAYS YOU GET A VOTE?
SO I THINK THAT MEANS I GET A SAY.
ULTIMATELY THE ONLY ONE WHOSE SAY REALLY MATTERS IS TIER'S.
YES, HE TOOK OUT PLUTO... BUT I'M NOT EVEN SURE HE WAS AWARE HE DID IT. HE WAS SO BERSERK...
RAHNE, HE'S YOUR SON...
AND YE WANT T'KNOW IF I THINK HE'D MAKE A USEFUL KILLING MACHINE, IS THAT IT?
WELL... YES, TO BE HONEST.

ALL AH KNOW IS, AH FINALLY GOT HIM T'SLEEP. SO IF WE ARE GONNA TAKE THE FIGHT TO THE DARK GODS...
...WE'LL HAVE T'WAIT TIL HE WAKES UP.
BECAUSE OTHERWISE AH DINNA SEE...
TIER.
TIER, I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME.
AH, THERE YOU ARE.
HUH?
YOU!
YOU JUST... JUST GET AWAY FROM ME!

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND ANYTHING THAT'S HAPPENING?
YOU HAVE THE CHANCE TO WALK AWAY FROM THIS UNSCATHED.
YEAH? HOW?
BY SURRENDERING TO ME, OF COURSE.
SURRENDER? I...I DON'T...
SURRENDER YOUR POWER TO MINE AND YOU CAN RULE AT MY SIDE! IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE FOR SURVIVAL.
YOU GOT *LUCKY* KILLING PLUTO. WE BOTH KNOW THAT.
I AM LITERALLY YOUR LAST HOPE.
I...I'M NOT SURE...I MEAN...
YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT IT WAY TOO MUCH.
WE BOTH KNOW YOU AREN'T A WARRIOR. ALL YOU REALLY WANT IS A PEACEFUL LIFE...
I CAN GIVE THAT TO YOU.

FOR A MOMENT IT ALL MAKES SENSE... AND THEN...
MAAAAAAAAA!
UNNNNFFFFF!
TIER! TIER, WAKE UP!
MY GOD, WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU? I DON'T...
ALL RIGHT, THEN. PLAN B IT IS!

TIER, GO! TAKE DOWN SATANA!
WHA- WHAT?
IT'S THE ONLY ORDER THAT POLARIS HAS TIME TO SHOUT BEFORE SATANA'S DEMONS TAKE HER DOWN.
EVERYTHING IS HAPPENING SO QUICKLY, WITH SUCH FEROCITY...
RIIIP
...THAT I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO LOOK FIRST.

THEN A FIST COMES OUT OF NOWHERE AND CATCHES ME IN THE FACE.
IDIOT.
TO THINK THAT YOU'RE THE CHAMPION PEOPLE WERE COUNTING ON. YOU SHOULD HAVE SURRENDERED...
YOU WERE GONNA KILL ME!
NONSENSE. YOU IMAGINED IT.
OR PERHAPS MEPHISTO OR ASMODEUS TRICKED YOU INTO IMAGINING IT.
OR MAYBE I LIED TO YOU. HARD TO BE SURE, ISN'T IT.
A SLICE ACROSS MY CHEST, AND I FEEL DESPAIR WELLING WITHIN ME.
SHE'S LAUGHING. IT'S SO EASY FOR HER.
DO YOU SERIOUSLY BELIEVE YOU CAN FRIGHTEN SATANA, DAUGHTER OF--
I SNAP.
RRRRAAAWWRRR

OH HELL.
RAAARRR!
MY MIND SPLITS. PART OF IT IS NOTHING BUT SELF-CONTAINED RAGE, FEEDING ON ITSELF AND PROPELLING ME FORWARD INTO SOME SORT OF BERSERK CREATURE I BARELY RECOGNIZE.
THE OTHER HALF REMAINS HARDLY LUCID, WITH RANDOM DISJOINTED THOUGHTS FLOATING THROUGH.
MONET'S TRYING TO JUMP IN, BUT SHE STILL SEEMS TOO WEAK...
WE ALL ARE. GETTING POUNDED FROM ALL SIDES...
EVEN MY MOTHER... EVEN HER...
I LOOK DESPERATELY FOR SOMETHING... ANYTHING...TO CLING TO FOR HOPE...
THERE'S NOTHING TO SEE.
THE FEROCITY CALLS TO ME.
I HAVE TO LISTEN.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SURRENDERED, SON.
YOU FIRST.
UNNNNHHH
YOU STARTED THIS.
BUT I'M GOING TO STOP IT!
JUST LIKE THAT, SHE DISAPPEARS, AND A SECOND LATER...

WHAT THE HELL...?
POLARIS. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO FIGHT THEM, YES?
FINE. LET'S GO.
FINE.
IS MONET GOING TO BE WELL ENOUGH TO TRAVEL?
SHE'S STILL BANGED UP FROM WHEN PLUTO WAS SMACKING HER AROUND.
WELL, GET HER ON HER FEET. WE CAN'T STAY HERE.
ON IT.
STAR, YOU'RE GOOD TO GO?
YES. ANYWHERE IN PARTICULAR?
YEAH. NEW YORK CITY. LAYLA'S GETTING HER WISH.
WE'RE GOING TO UNLEASH TIER ON THE HELL LORDS.
IF HE CAN KILL THEM, THEN THAT'S WHAT HE'LL DO.

MONET, I'M NOT SURE THAT YOU'RE--
NO, IT'S NOT.
I TOOK A FEW ROUGH SHOTS, THAT'S ALL.
I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S...
NO. IT'S NOT.
MONET...
PLUTO JUST GOT IN A FEW LUCKY SHOTS, THAT'S ALL. YOU'RE MAKING TOO MUCH OF A...
MONET... YOU'RE BLEEDING.
INSIDE YOUR HEAD.
YOU TRIED TO TAKE ON A HELL GOD AND NOW YOU'RE *DYING* BECAUSE OF IT.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M TELLING YOU?
ARE YOU CERTAIN?
I'M AFRAID SO.
TELL NO ONE.
OF COURSE NOT.

UNNNNNNNHH...
SSSSSSSSTOP IIIIITT....
I SSSSSSSAID...
THAK
SSSSSSSTOP IIIIIT!
=GHHH=
=GHHHHHH=
SORRY, MADROX.
HASTA BE DONE.

GUIDO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I JUST FIGURED...I MEAN, I THOUGHT...
THAT I WAS STICKING WITH YA BECAUSE I FIGURED YOU WERE WORKIN' FOR MEPHISTO? THE GUY WHO RECRUITED ME IN THE FIRST PLACE?
THAT I DIDN'T KNOW YA HAD YER OWN AGENDA?
SEE, THIS IS WHY THE 'PHIST NEEDED SOME EXTRA HANDS. TOO MUCH FOR HIM T'PAY ATTENTION TO, 'SPECIALLY WITH THE WAR GOIN'.
UH... GUIDO? DO YOU REALLY WANNA KILL MADROX?
OH. RIGHT. SORRY.

SO...LET'S GET'CHA OUTTA THERE.
ONCE THESE ROPES ARE BROKE, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO TELEPORT, YEAH?
NOT REALLY, NOPE.
THAT'S THE THEORY. BUT...I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOU'RE NOT ON MY FATHER'S SIDE?
MY SIDE, THEN?
BABY, I'M ON MY SIDE.
RIGHT NOW, THAT'S ALL YOU NEED T'KNOW.
SO... WHERE TO?
WE'VE GOT TO GET TO WHEREVER TIER IS. HE'S THE ONE WHO STARTED THIS...
AND HE'S THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO BE ABLE TO END THIS.

#254
JARDIN

ARE YE READY TO GO? POLARIS SEEMS DETERMINED THAT...
TIER? WHAT'S WRONG? YE KNOW YOU CAN TELL ME...
I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT ME TO DO, MOTHER. I KNOW WHAT YOU NEED ME TO BE.
NO ONE EXCEPT ME HAS THE OPPORTUNITY, OR THE ABILITY, TO KILL THE HELL LORDS.
THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE EXPECTING ME TO DO. AND SO I HAVE TO DO IT.
NO. NO, YOU'RE WRONG. FIRST AND FOREMOST, AH EXPECT YE TO REMAIN TRUE TO YOURSELF...
...IN A WAY THAT AH WAS NEVER ABLE TO.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT POLARIS WANTS. JUST TELL ME WHAT YE WANT.
TO FIND ANOTHER WAY.
THEN THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO.
COME ON. LET'S GO BACK AND TELL THE OTHERS.

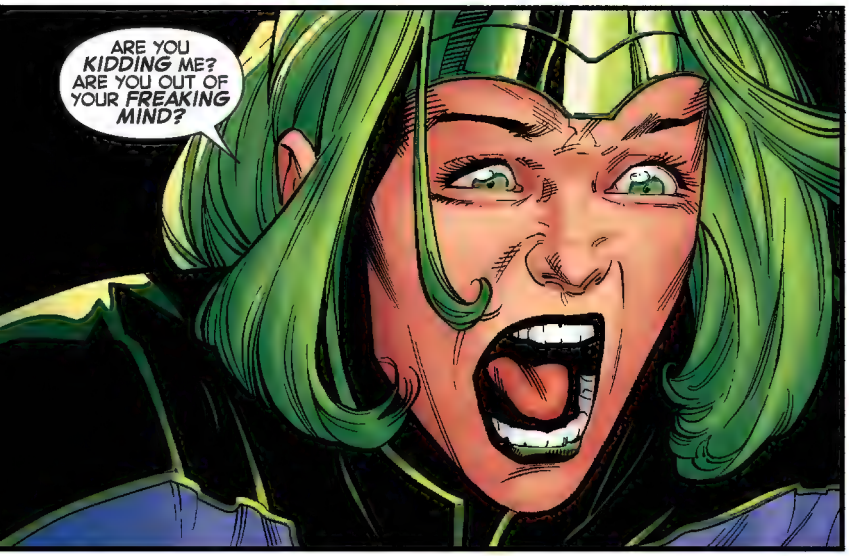
WHERE THE HELL DID HE WANDER OFF TO? WE HAVE TO GET MOVING...IT'S NOT SAFE TO STAY HERE.
I'M STILL NOT SURE ABOUT THIS. STAR ALREADY HAS A BUSTED WING. DO WE REALLY KNOW IF HE'S UP FOR THIS?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'LL BE FINE. CAN WE PLEASE JUST GET GOING ALREADY?
FINALLY. MOTHER AND SON, TOGETHER AGAIN. LET'S GET MOVING.
DEFINITELY. WE WASTED TOO MUCH TIME ALREADY.
THE SOONER THE BETTER.
BEFORE WE GO, WE NEED TO DISCUSS--
IT CAN WAIT FOR ONCE WE GET THERE. LONGSHOT IS RIGHT: WE SPENT TOO MUCH TIME HERE ALREADY. LET'S GO.
NO! WAIT! YE NEED TO LISTEN--
NEXT STOP, NEW YORK CITY.
STAR! AH SAID WAIT...

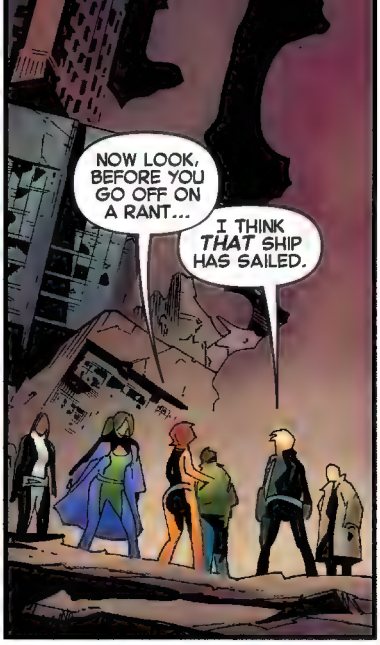
THE NEXT THING I KNOW, BEFORE MY MOTHER CAN SAY A WORD, WE VANISH...
...AND REAPPEAR SECONDS LATER IN A SECTION OF NEW YORK. AS NEAR AS I CAN TELL, IT'S PART OF TIMES SQUARE.
OR AT LEAST IT WAS. I'M NOT SURE THERE ARE WORDS TO DESCRIBE WHAT IT IS NOW.
THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HELL LORDS FIGHT. AND THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY END TO IT.

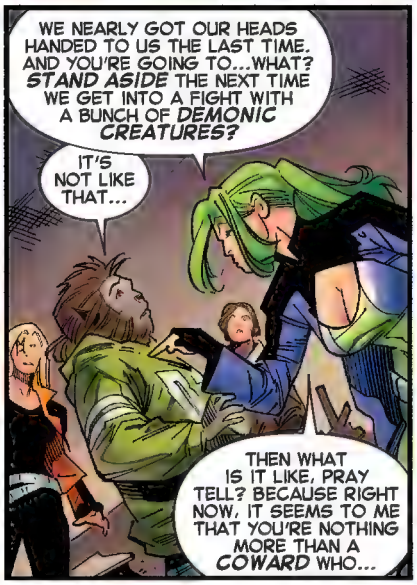
AT LEAST NONE THAT I CAN SEE.
DAMN THEM! WHERE ARE MY MINIONS?
TO ME! NOW!
AH! AT LAST. TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH TO CATCH UP WITH ME.
SPREAD OUT. AT LEAST ONE OF THEM IS IN THE AREA. I CAN SMELL HIM.
I THINK IT MAY BE MEPHISTO, BUT I CANNOT BE CERTAIN. PROCEED WITH CAUTION, BUT IF YOU ENCOUNTER HIM, SUMMON ME RATHER THAN TRYING TO TAKE HIM YOURSELF. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
I SAID DO YOU UNDERST--

AAAAAAAA
YOUR MEANING IS CRYSTAL CLEAR. AT LEAST TO ME. LESS SO TO YOU.

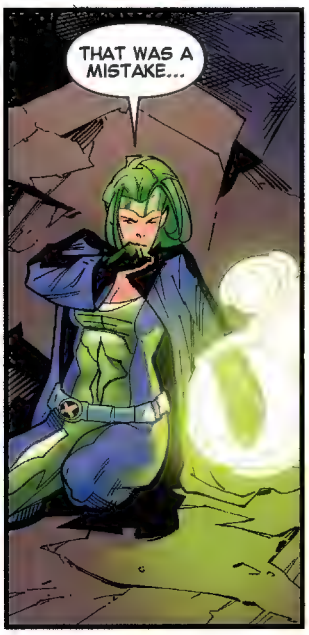
WHAT'S WRONG, SATANNISH? NOTHING MORE TO SAY? NO MORE FORBIDDING DECLARATIONS?
YOU ARE MY PRISONER NOW. SO I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO SAY ON THE SUBJECT.
INSTEAD, YOU WILL BE TRANSPORTED TO MY NEW DOMICILE, WHERE YOU WILL BE KEPT HELPLESS AND CHAINED.
WHICH IS AS IT SHOULD BE.
WHEN WE FINALLY HAVE A MINUTE TO TALK TO EACH OTHER, I TELL POLARIS ABOUT MY HESITATION. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, SHE TAKES IT RATHER WELL.


ARE YOU KIDDING ME? ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR FREAKING MIND?

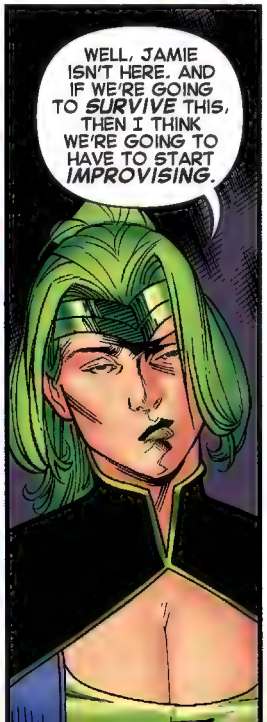

NOW LOOK, BEFORE YOU GO OFF ON A RANT...
I THINK THAT SHIP HAS SAILED.


WE NEARLY GOT OUR HEADS HANDED TO US THE LAST TIME. AND YOU'RE GOING TO...WHAT? STAND ASIDE THE NEXT TIME WE GET INTO A FIGHT WITH A BUNCH OF DEMONIC CREATURES?
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT...
THEN WHAT IS IT LIKE, PRAY TELL? BECAUSE RIGHT NOW, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU'RE NOTHING MORE THAN A COWARD WHO...

SHUT UP! NOBODY ASKED YE!


THAT WAS A MISTAKE...

NO, LORNA. A MISTAKE WOULD BE FORCING HIM DOWN THE ROAD HE'S NOT READY TO WALK.
IT'S NOT SOMETHING JAMIE WOULD DO IF HE WERE HERE, AND I DON'T THINK...


WELL, JAMIE ISN'T HERE. AND IF WE'RE GOING TO SURVIVE THIS, THEN I THINK WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO START IMPROVISING.

BUT HEY, NOBODY STEPPED UP AND PUT ME IN CHARGE. IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE TO MAKE ALL THE DECISIONS. IF SOMEONE FEELS DIFFERENTLY, SAY SO NOW.
COME ON. THIS IS A TEAM. SPEAK UP.
COOPER
FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I DON'T THINK ANYONE SHOULD HAVE TO WALK THE PATH OF DEATH IF THEY'RE NOT READY TO.
NEITHER DO I.
ANYBODY ELSE CARE TO WEIGH IN? I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE FACING THE END OF THE WORLD OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT. I'M SURE WE CAN JUST STAND AROUND AND...
OH, TERRIFIC.
HEADS UP.
THEIR TIMING COULD NOT HAVE BEEN WORSE...OR, I SUPPOSE, BETTER, IF YOU WANT TO LOOK AT IT THAT WAY.
THEY HAD COME LITERALLY OUT OF NOWHERE AND SUDDENLY IT WAS OUR JOB TO SEND THEM BACK THERE.
AT LEAST THEY WERE ALONE. AS IN, THEIR HELL LORD BOSSES WERE APPARENTLY BUSY ELSEWHERE...

I'M SURE THEY WERE KEEPING THEMSELVES WELL OCCUPIED.
CLANG
GIVE UP, WOMAN. YOU HAVE NO CHANCE.
HOW STRANGE. THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY TO YOU, ASMODEUS.
YOU DARE SPEAK THAT WAY TO ASMODEUS HIMSELF? THE DEMON LORD OF ALL DEMON LORDS?!
THIS IS NOT THE TEMERITY THAT YOU SHOULD BE DISPLAYING, AND FOR THIS YOU MUST BE PUNISHED...
...SEVERELY!
CHUK

EH?
WHERE DID SHE...?
I BELIEVE YOU WERE LOOKING FOR ME.
HIDING BEHIND A SPELL SO SIMPLE THAT EVEN AN *AMATEUR* SHOULD'VE BEEN ABLE TO DETECT IT.
EEEYUMMHHH
I AM SURPRISED YOU DID NOT SEE IT COMING.
WELL? NOTHING TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?
SO MUCH FOR THE GREAT GOD ASMODEUS.

UNHHHHHHHHH
YES, THAT WAS RATHER SLOPPY OF HIM TO LOSE AWARENESS OF HIS SURROUNDINGS AND LEAVE HIMSELF OPEN FOR A FATAL STROKE.
YOU, OF COURSE, WOULD NEVER DO THAT. WOULD YOU?
YOU WON'T WIN, YOU CRETIN. I...I SWEAR YOU...
SPLUUUTCH
I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T QUITE CATCH THAT. WERE YOU SAYING SOMETHING?
I DIDN'T THINK SO. NOW... GO AND AWAIT ME IN THE TRAP THAT WILL BE HOLDING YOU AT MY NEW ABODE. THERE'S A GOOD LASS.

GET READY! TAKE THEM DOWN ANY WAY YOU...
EVERYBODY FREEZE!
NOBODY APPROACH THEM! BACK UP! THIS WAY! TOWARD ME!
I SAID TOWARD ME! NOW, DAMN YOU!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM. YOU KNOW WHAT I AM CAPABLE OF DOING TO YOU IF YOU SHOULD DISSATISFY ME.
THAT'S IT. THAT'S RIGHT. THIS WAY.
NOW...
I WANT YOU TO SEEK OUT MY FATHER. BRING YOUR AID TO HIM WHEREVER HE IS, FOR I'M SURE HE IS IN NEED OF IT.
WELL? WHY ARE YOU STANDING HERE STILL? YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS. GO.
I SAID GO!

EVERYBODY OKAY? I GOT HERE IN TIME, YES?
NOW OPEN
MAYBE. OR MAYBE IT WAS JUST IN TIME TO GET RID OF A BUNCH OF DEMONS *YOU* SENT AFTER US IN THE FIRST PLACE.
LIKE SHE SAID. HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO *TRUST* YOU? WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO THE HELL YOU ARE.
HER *NAME* IS JEZEBEL, SHE'S THE DAUGHTER OF *MEPHISTO*...
...AND YOU BETTER START TRUSTING HER, 'CAUSE SHE'S THE ONE CHANCE YOU GUYS HAVE OF GETTING OUT OF THIS IN ONE PIECE.

JAMIE! THAT'S JAMIE! GUIDO, GIVE HIM...
NO, WAIT. THAT'S NOT HIM. NOT EXACTLY...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AW NUTS...
RRRRR AAAA RRRRR
REIN HIM IN! WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS! WE HAVE TO GET TIER TO THE FRONT LINE IMMEDIATELY!

HE'S NOT GOING TO ANY FRONT LINES. NOT WITH YE; NOT WITH ANYBODY.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WELCOME TO MY WORLD.
HEY!
I'M REALLY SORRY, BUT WE SIMPLY DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS. THERE'S PLACES HE HAS TO BE, AND THIS ISN'T ONE OF THEM.
COME ON, KID.
I SAID NO!
EYYARRRRHHH
AND I SAID I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS! DID YOU THINK I WAS KIDDING?
GUIDO! A LITTLE HELP HERE!

I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK...
OH NO YOU DON'T!
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOREVER TO TAKE A REAL SWING AT YOU!
GEE, I HATE TO THINK, AFTER ALL THIS WAITING, THAT THIS IS WHAT IT'S GONNA AMOUNT TO!

EVERYWHERE I TURN, THERE ARE DEMONIC JAMIES BATTLING EVERYONE. I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW IT HAPPENED SO FAST.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT IT'S MY FAULT...
...AND THAT I NEVER MEANT FOR THIS TO HAPPEN. I JUST DIDN'T WANT TO BE TURNED INTO A KILLING MACHINE. WAS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK?
I GUESS SO.
UNNFFFF!
OH, FANTASTIC.
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? YOU'RE NOT HELPING HIM! YOU'RE JUST PROTECTING HIM FROM WHAT HE HAS TO DO.
I KNOW. BUT HE'S NOT WILLING TO DO IT. SO I HAVE TO PROTECT HIM.
THEN YOU REALLY NEED TO GET YOUR PRIORITIES IN ORDER.
07

MONET! HOLD ON!
IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. I HAVE HIM UNDER CONTROL.
SEE?
UH-OH...
MONET!!!
WELL, THIS IS UNFORTUNATE.

WHAT... WHAT'S GOING...?
WHERE...?
DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO ASK?
I MEAN, IT SHOULD BE KIND OF OBVIOUS.
SO... YOU WANT ME TO FIND A WAY TO BRING YOU BACK UPSTAIRS? OR ARE YOU STILL ANXIOUS TO HAVE A *THROWDOWN* WITH--
OH, YES INDEED.

AND I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP GETTING OUT OF HERE. I'LL DO FINE ON MY OWN, THANKS.
AND WHEN I DO, I ASSURE YOU, IT'S GOING TO BE *WITHOUT YOU*, ONCE AND FOR ALL!

#255
WILLIAMS

NEW YORK CITY.
MY GOD, THE DEMONIC MADROXES JUST KEEP COMING!
KIND OF SUCKS TO BE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THAT EQUATION FOR ONCE.

WE HAVE TO GO DOWN AFTER MONET!
THERE'S NOWHERE TO GO, STAR! SHE GOT YANKED INTO SOME SORT OF...I DON'T KNOW...DIMENSIONAL PORTAL. WHEREVER SHE IS...

...SHE'S ON HER OWN.

YOU BROUGHT THIS ON *YOURSELF*, GUIDO! YOU ALLIED YOURSELF WITH THE WRONG PEOPLE, AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO *PAY FOR IT!*

ALLIED MYSELF?! I WOUND UP WITH THE PEOPLE YOU *PUSHED* ME TO. WHOEVER I WOUND UP WITH, IT'S *YOUR* FAULT, MONET! NOT MINE!

OH, THAT FIGURES. BLAME EVERYBODY BUT YOURSELF. IT DOESN'T GET MORE *TYPICAL* THAN THAT!

I'M NOT BLAMING ANYBODY FOR NOTHING! I LEAVE THAT ALL TO YOU!
OOOOOOOFF!
WHENEVER ANYTHING GOES WRONG, YOU'RE THERE READY TO START POINTING FINGERS AND BLAMING IT ON...
EH?
WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU? THAT SHOULDN'T'VE HURT *THAT* MUCH.
NOTHING. I'M FINE.

I'M SERIOUS. YOU'RE MOVING LIKE SLUDGE. THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON WITH--
I SAID NOTHING!
AND SINCE THIS IS OBVIOUSLY THE LAST FIGHT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE...
...IT WOULD BE NICE IF YOU COULD ACTUALLY PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT I WAS SAYING FOR ONCE!

WILL THE TWO OF YOU COME OUT ALREADY? YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T STAY PROTECTED IN THERE FOREVER!
I'M ACTUALLY *UNAWARE* OF THAT, JEZEBEL. I WAS PLANNING TO STAY HERE FOR THE LONG HAUL.
TO WHAT POINT AND PURPOSE, LAYLA MILLER? WE KNOW THAT TIER IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN STOP THE HELL LORDS! INSTEAD YOU'RE LETTING HIM HIDE IN YOUR FORCEFIELD...
"...WHILE AN ARMY OF YOUR DEMONIZED HUSBAND IS *LAYING WASTE* TO YOUR TEAM."
SO WILL YOU STOP WASTING MY *TIME* AND GIVE HIM TO ME?
CAN YOU KEEP IT GOING?
FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER. BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD START TRYING TO COME UP WITH OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.

GET THE HELL AWAY FROM MUH SON!
OH, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, SINCLAIR.
YOU SHOULD BE THE FIRST ONE IN LINE GETTING HIM TO DO THIS!
YE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!
I KNOW WHAT HAS TO BE DONE! AND I KNOW THAT...
...THAT...
UNFFFF!
WHAT THE HELL--?

MY CHILDREN...
...WONDERFUL NEWS...
I AM PLEASED TO TELL YOU THAT THE HELL ON EARTH WAR...
...IS FINALLY OVER.
THEY JUST STOPPED FIGHTING COMPLETELY. SOMEBODY WANT TO TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?
I HAVE NO IDEA.

YOU HAVE ALL AIDED ME IN A BRUTAL FIGHT AGAINST NOT ONLY MY FELLOW HELL LORDS, BUT ALSO THE CHAMPIONS OF THE EARTH.
IT HAS BEEN A LONG STRUGGLE, BUT ULTIMATELY WORTH OUR WHILE. AND NOW...
...NOW IT IS TIME TO CELEBRATE.

AND SO I HAVE CREATED A HOME HERE ON EARTH TO CELEBRATE MY NEW STATUS.
IT IS OPEN TO ANY WHO PLEDGE THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO ME.
IT ALSO SERVES AS THE NEW HOME FOR MY FORMER ENEMIES. COME AND SEE THEM AND LAUGH AT THEIR DEFEAT.

I'LL BE DAMNED. MEPHISTO REALLY--
UNFFFF!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT DISTRACTED YOU...
...BUT YOU DON'T WIN A FIGHT WITH ME WITHOUT KEEPING YOUR ATTENTION FOCUSED!

OKAY! THAT'S IT! NO MORE SCREWING AROUND!
I'M THROUGH DANCING WITH YOU!
YOU WANT TO GO THE DISTANCE? FINE!
UNNNFFFF!

AWWW, WHAT'S THE MATTER? NOT BOUNCING BACK FROM THAT ONE SO *QUICK?*
COME ON! YA MUST HAVE SOME KIND OF SNAPPY--
WHOA.
SO... SO MUCH BLOOD. CRIPES.
MONET?
MONET, COME ON. I DIDN'T HIT YOU THAT HARD.
WHAT, YOU'RE GOING *UNCONSCIOUS* NOW? THAT'S NUTS!
THIS IS SOME KIND OF TRICK, RIGHT? COME ON, WAKE UP! *WAKE UP, DAMMIT!*

UNFFFF!
WAKEY WAKEY.
OH. YOU.
OF COURSE IT'S ME! AND US. YOU REMEMBER: THE PEOPLE YOU WERE TRYING TO KICK THE CRAP OUT OF.
THERE'S NO POINT TO IT ANYMORE. IF IT HELPS YOU BALANCE YOUR SCALES, YOU CAN FEEL THAT YOU WON. THE BOY CAN STAY WITH YOU. CONGRATULATIONS.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHAT DO YOU--?
MY FATHER WON, OKAY? HAPPY?
HE MANAGED TO PUT DOWN THE OTHER HELL LORDS SOMEHOW AND NOW HE'S SAYING HE WON! AND APPARENTLY THERE'S NO ONE LEFT TO TELL HIM HE DIDN'T.
HE'S GOT A CASTLE SET UP AS A MONUMENT TO HIS GREATNESS. AND HE'S SETTLING IN TO RULE THE WORLD. ANY OF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?
I SURE HOPE NOT. BECAUSE THIS IS YOUR NEW WORLD AND YOU'RE WELCOME TO IT.
I TRIED TO AVOID IT, BUT IT'S WHAT YOU'RE STUCK WITH. GOOD LUCK. ME...
I'M GOING TO TRY AND FIND SOMEPLACE MORE HOSPITABLE.
LIKE MAYBE MARS.

JUST FOR A MOMENT, I THINK SHE'S KIDDING SOMEHOW. THAT IT'S SOME SORT OF NEW TRICK. BUT THEN I REALIZE PRETTY QUICKLY...
YOU'RE SERIOUS.
OF COURSE I'M SERIOUS. I'M TELLING YOU THAT YOU CAN GO OFF AND DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
I TRIED MY BEST. BUT YOU GUYS ARE DONE.
07
DROP THE FIELD.
ARE YOU SURE?
POSITIVE.
07
I THOUGHT THE ONLY WAY SOMEONE COULD WIN WAS TO KILL ME.
WELL, OBVIOUSLY THEY FOUND ANOTHER WAY. LUCKY YOU.
ANYWAY, TAKE CARE. IT'S BEEN SURREAL.
WAIT! JAMIE...
...WAS CHANGED BY MEPHISTO INTO A DEMON. I DON'T HAVE THE JUICE TO SWITCH HIM BACK. SORRY.
JAMIE...

CAN YOU GET US THERE? TO MEPHISTO'S STRONGHOLD?
OF COURSE I CAN. BUT WHAT'S THE POINT IF...
WHAT?
CAN I KILL HIM?
TIER, WE'VE BEEN OVER THIS. YOU DON'T HAVE TO--
CAN I...
...KILL HIM?
I DON'T KNOW. WITH ALL THE POWER HE HAS...ALL THE RESOURCES NOW...
I DON'T KNOW.
I WASTED TOO MUCH TIME BEING INDECISIVE. THE WHOLE DAMNED WORLD'S UPENDED AND IT'S ALL MY FAULT.
THEN AGAIN, I GUESS BEING ORDINARY WAS NEVER AN OPTION FOR ME ANYWAY.
SO LET'S FIND OUT.
ARE YE SURE?
I DON'T HAVE THE OPTION NOT TO BE.

STOP! WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE UNTIL WE FIND MONET!
OKAY, FINE. ANYTHING TO KEEP THIS GOING.
LET'S TRY NOT TO HAVE THIS TAKE TOO LONG.
JUST KEEP IN MIND THAT THEY COULD BE ANYWH--
THERE!
OH. OKAY. THAT WAS QUICK.
GUIDO! WHERE IS--?
GUIDO?

SHE...
SHE'S DEAD.
I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND. I DIDN'T HIT HER THAT HARD. THERE'S...THERE'S NO REASON...
WHY IS SHE DEAD?

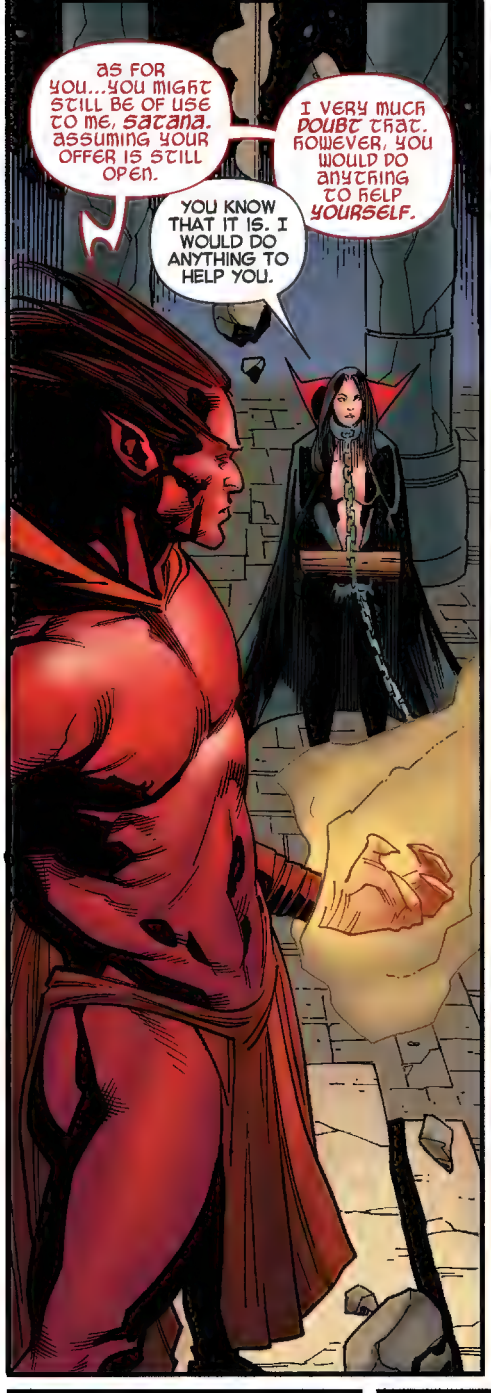
YOU MURDERING BASTARD!
GET OFFA ME!
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.
GUIDO, WE'RE MOUNTING AN ATTACK ON MY FATHER'S CASTLE. ARE YOU IN?
GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE.

MY LORD MEPHISTO... JEZEBEL IS COMING. AND SHE'S BRINGING THE GOD SLAYER WITH HER.
YOU ARE QUITE SURE?
YES, MY LORD. AND IF YOU WOULD ONLY BELIEVE MY PLEDGE OF LOYALTY TO YOU AND RELEASE ME, I CAN AID YOU AGAINST--
THAT WILL HARDLY BE NECESSARY, MY DEAR SATANA. I ASSURE YOU...
...I WILL BE MORE THAN READY FOR THEM.

#256
YARDIN

MONET IS DEAD.
SHATTERSTAR TOLD US THAT HE SAW GUIDO HOLDING HER BODY, LOOKING STUNNED. ME, I'M STILL HAVING TROUBLE BELIEVING IT.
MONET WAS SO STRONG, SO *POWERFUL*. IT JUST SEEMS UNFATHOMABLE THAT SHE COULD REALLY BE GONE.
ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO ARE HAVING NO TROUBLE BELIEVING IT AND LETTING IT SHAPE THEIR BEHAVIOR.
AND WHEN THEY CONFRONT SOMEONE WHO GETS IN THEIR WAY...
...IT DOES NOT TEND TO END *WELL* FOR THAT PERSON.
THIS IS FOR MONET, YOU SONS OF BITCHES.

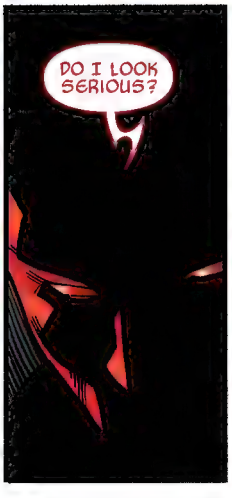
DOUBTLESS THAT IS X-FACTOR ANNOUNCING THEIR ARRIVAL. GET OUT THERE AND GREET THEM ACCORDINGLY.


AS FOR YOU...YOU MIGHT STILL BE OF USE TO ME, *SATANA*. ASSUMING YOUR OFFER IS STILL OPEN.
I VERY MUCH *DOUBT* THAT. HOWEVER, YOU WOULD DO ANYTHING TO HELP *YOURSELF*.
YOU KNOW THAT IT IS. I WOULD DO ANYTHING TO HELP YOU.

AND SO HERE IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

YOU KNOW THE ROOM WHERE I HAVE THE OTHER *HELL LORDS* IMPRISONED.
OF COURSE.
GO TO THEM AND TELL THEM THAT I AM LOOKING FOR *ALLIES* AGAINST X-FACTOR. ANYONE WHO PLEDGES HIMSELF TO ME, I WILL RELEASE FROM IMPRISONMENT SO THAT THEY CAN AID ME.

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS.


DO I LOOK SERIOUS?

ALL RIGHT. I'M ON IT.

MEPHISTO'S CREATURES COME CHARGING OUT EN MASSE. IF I WERE ANYWHERE NEAR IT, I'D PROBABLY BE KIND OF CONCERNED.
AS IT HAPPENS, THOUGH, POLARIS HAS PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING IN HAND, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT.
YOU SEE, SHE HAS A VIRTUAL ARMY BEHIND HER...
...AN ARMY OF DEMONIC MADROXES OUT FOR BLOOD, UNDER THE COMMAND OF JEZEBEL.
PRETTY NASTY IF YOU ASK ME.
BUT I CAN'T BE THERE TO SEE IT. YOU SEE, MY NAME IS TIER. I'M THE SON OF RAHNE SINCLAIR...

...AND I'M BUSY ELSEWHERE, TRYING TO PUT AN END TO ALL THIS.
ALL OF YOU, ON YOUR FEET. I BRING NEWS FROM...
WHAT IN THE--?
THEY'RE... THEY'RE DEAD. THEY'RE ALL DEAD.
SENT BACK TO HELL, ONLY ABLE TO WATCH FROM THE SIDELINES UNTIL THIS WAR IS OVER.
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE?

I DID!
YOU! H-HOW DID YOU...?
CAME IN THROUGH THE BACK...WITH MY FRIENDS.
ALL RIGHT, SON. BACK AWAY FROM HER.
MEPHISTO LEFT HER ALONE FOR A REASON. SHE MIGHT BE OF USE TO--
I DON'T HEAR THEM. THEY'RE SAYING SOMETHING OF NO CONSEQUENCE.
SATANA SWEARS OUT A STRING OF CURSES. THEY MEAN NOTHING TO ME.
OR NOT.
MEPHISTO...
MEPHISTO NEXT. AND THEN IT'S OVER.

BA-THOOM
SO. MY OWN CHILD LEADS THE CHARGE AGAINST ME.
TO THINK THAT MY TRIUMPH WOULD COME ON SO DARK A DAY.
HARDLY THE TIME FOR YOU TO START GETTING SENTIMENTAL.
AND YOU HAVEN'T TRULY WON YET.
THAT, MY DEAR, IS MERELY A MATTER OF TIME. THERE IS NO POINT IN DELAYING THE INEVITABLE!

NEARBY...
NNN...
LOST MORE OF YOUR DUPES? I KNOW THIS MUST BE HARD ON YOU, JAMIE, BUT IF YOU--
OOOOFFFFF!
RAAARRRR!
UNNNFFFF!
I'M SORRY, JAMIE, BUT YOU ARE THE ORIGINAL. YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE. NOT 'TIL THIS IS ALL OVER. AND WHAT'S FRIGHTENING IS...
...EVEN I'M NOT SURE HOW THIS ENDS.

THERE! UP THERE!
I SEE IT. HELL, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO MISS.
WELL WELL. I SEE THE YOUNG ONE HAS FINALLY DECIDED TO TAKE HIS PLACE IN THE MIDST OF BATTLE.
WHAT A CRYING SHAME...
...THAT WILL *NOT* BE HAPPENING ANYTIME SOON.
I TAKE IT THAT YOU HAVE SENT MY *COMPETITION* BACK TO THE *HELLS* FROM WHENCE THEY CAME. I BELIEVE YOU WILL FIND THAT I WILL NOT BE SO *EASILY* DISPOSED OF.
FREE HIM FROM THAT! I WILL ATTEND TO THIS--!

FWOOM
NEXT?
COME NOW. DO NOT BE SHY.
YOU SON OF A BITCH! I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF!
WILL YOU NOW?
THIS IS GETTING BORING.
FAR, FAR TOO SIMPLE.

THE FLAME...SO INTENSE...IT'S ALMOST TOO MUCH TO BEAR.
BUT I HAVE TO KEEP PUSHING... HAVE TO...
WHO NEXT? HOW ABOUT...
...THE WOLF GIRL?
I GO BERSERK. I HAVE MAYBE SECONDS BEFORE MY MOTHER GETS BLASTED FROM EXISTENCE.
THE CAGE IS INCINERATING ME BUT I DON'T EVEN FEEL IT.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT MY MOTHER IS IN DANGER...

...AND I'LL BE DAMNED IF I'M HELD BACK FROM HELPING HER.
EH?
NO!
KEEP BACK!
I HAVE HIM. AT LAST, WE'LL BE ABLE TO PUT A STOP TO THIS.

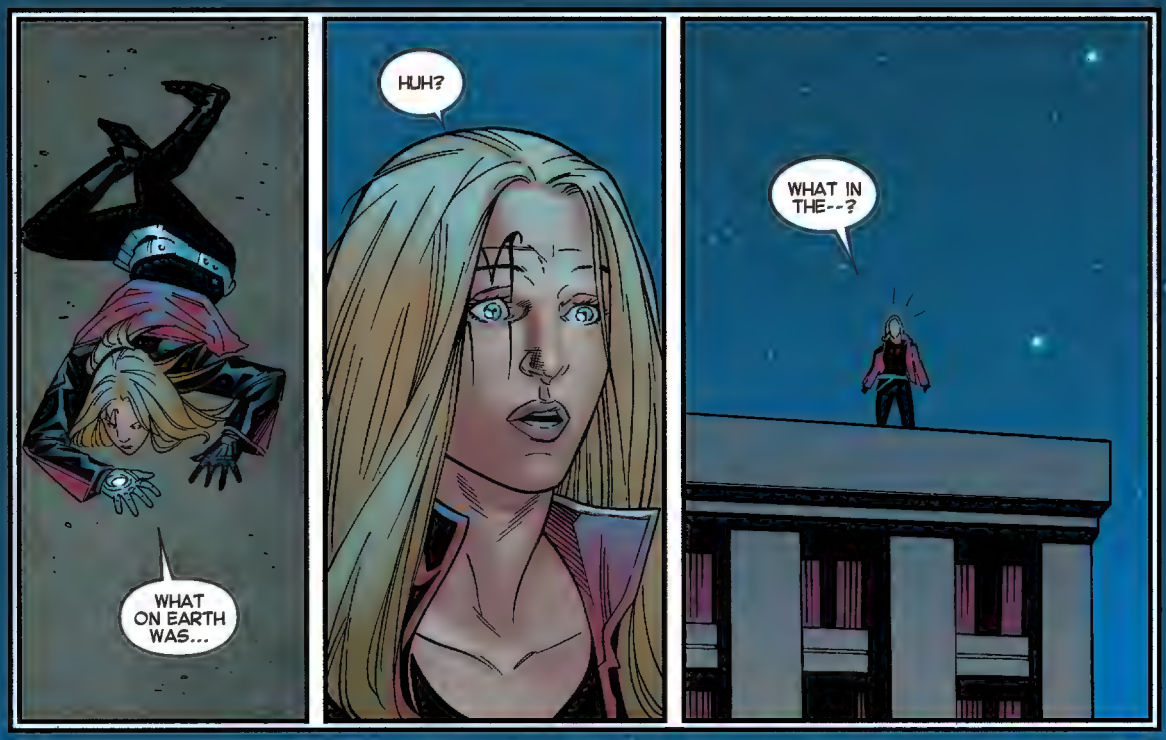
FORM RANKS! TAKE THE DEMONS!
DON'T LET THEM HELP MEPHISTO!
MY TEAM. MY TEAM HAS MY BACK.
THAT'S GOING TO BE ALL I NEED.
NO! DAMN YOU, NO! THIS ISN'T POSSIBLE!
YOU'RE A CHILD!
I WAS!
IN ANOTHER LIFE, MAYBE I COULD HAVE LIVED AS AN INNOCENT.

AND NOW... NOW THE RULES OF YOUR GAME WILL FINALLY BE TAKEN CARE OF!
FINALLY THE HELL ON EARTH WAR WILL BE...
BUT YOUR KIND TOOK CARE OF THAT.
...OVER?
OH. WELL... THAT'S... THAT'S NOT...
...RIGHT...
NO!

YEAH. I'FRAID SO.
WHOEVER KILLS TIER WINS.
GUESS I WON.

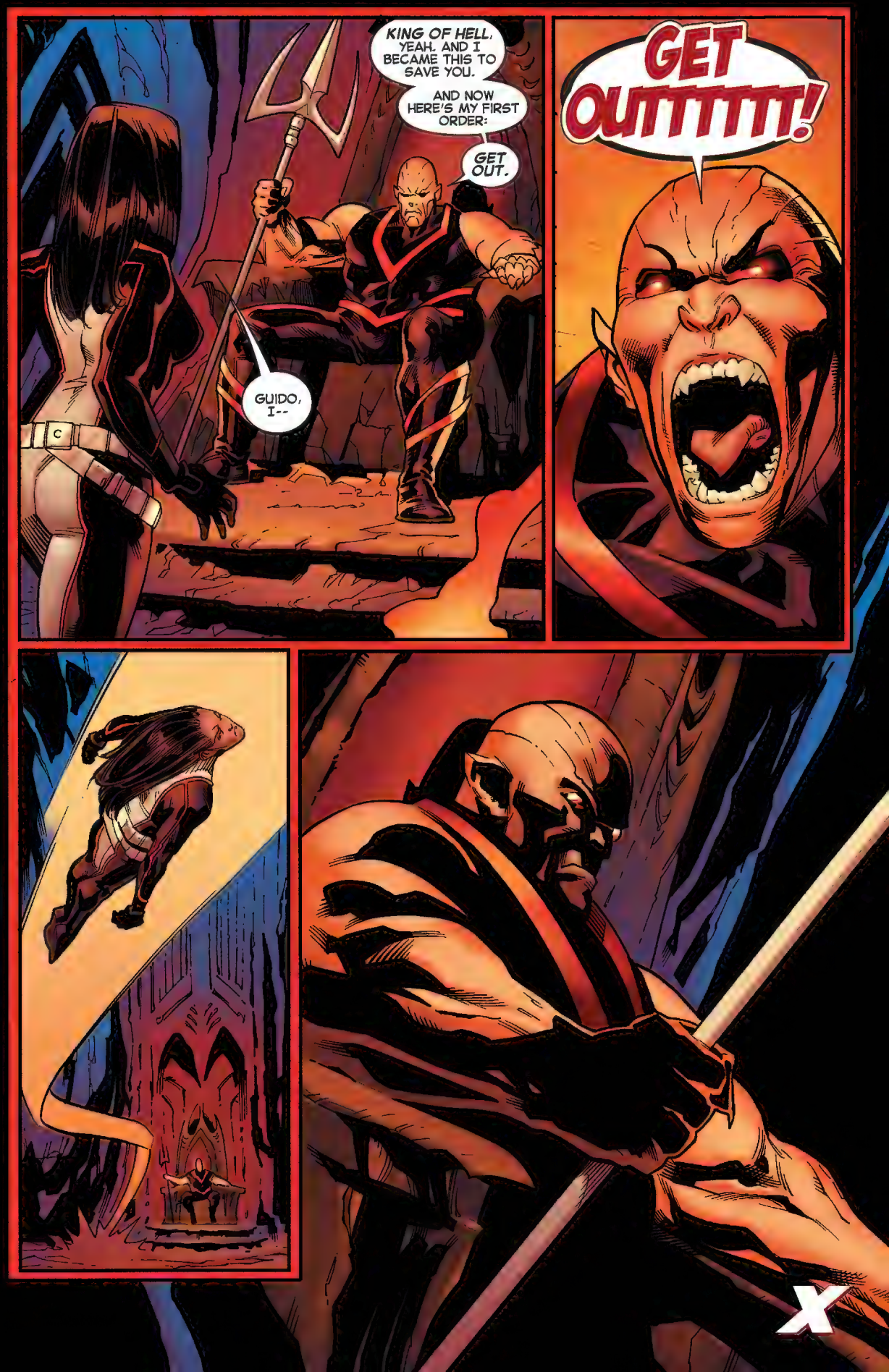
GUIDO! YE BASTARD!
SHUT UP! YA DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!
YOU-- UH-OH.
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE! YOU'RE
NO ONE!
YOU'RE--
YER WRONG ABOUT THAT.
I'M THE GUY IN CHARGE.

AND WE'RE GONNA BE DOIN' THINGS MY WAY FROM NOW ON!
OH GOD. THIS ISN'T GOOD.
THE FIGHTING STOPPED, I THINK. BUT I'M NOT SURE IF THAT'S BAD OR--
WHAT THE HELL?
WHA-THWAM


WHAT ON EARTH WAS...
HUH?
WHAT IN THE--?

IT'S GONE. THEY'RE GONE. THE CASTLE... JAMIE... EVERYONE.
I'VE SPENT MOST OF MY LIFE KNOWING STUFF.
I PICKED A *HELL* OF A TIME TO BE CLUELESS.

WHA--? WHERE?
YOU'RE IN *HELL*, MONET.
I... I DON'T UNDER--
YOU'RE THE--?
YOU... WHAT?
YOUR LIFE. I SAVED IT.
ALL I HAD TO DO WAS KILL A KID AND BECOME THE KING OF HELL. AT WHICH POINT I HAD THE POWER TO BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE.
BUT HEY... NO TROUBLE WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE A SOUL, RIGHT?
YOU!
YEAH. ME.
WHAT DID YOU--?
I SAVED YOUR LIFE.


KING OF HELL, YEAH. AND I BECAME THIS TO SAVE YOU.
AND NOW HERE'S MY FIRST ORDER:
GET OUT.
GUIDO, I--
GET OUTTTTTT!

#250 Variant by Clay Mann & David Curiel

MAN
2012

X-FACTOR # 253
SATANA'S DEMONS

SOME BIG
SOME SMALL
NOT ALL HUMAN
SIZE.

L. KIRK
2013

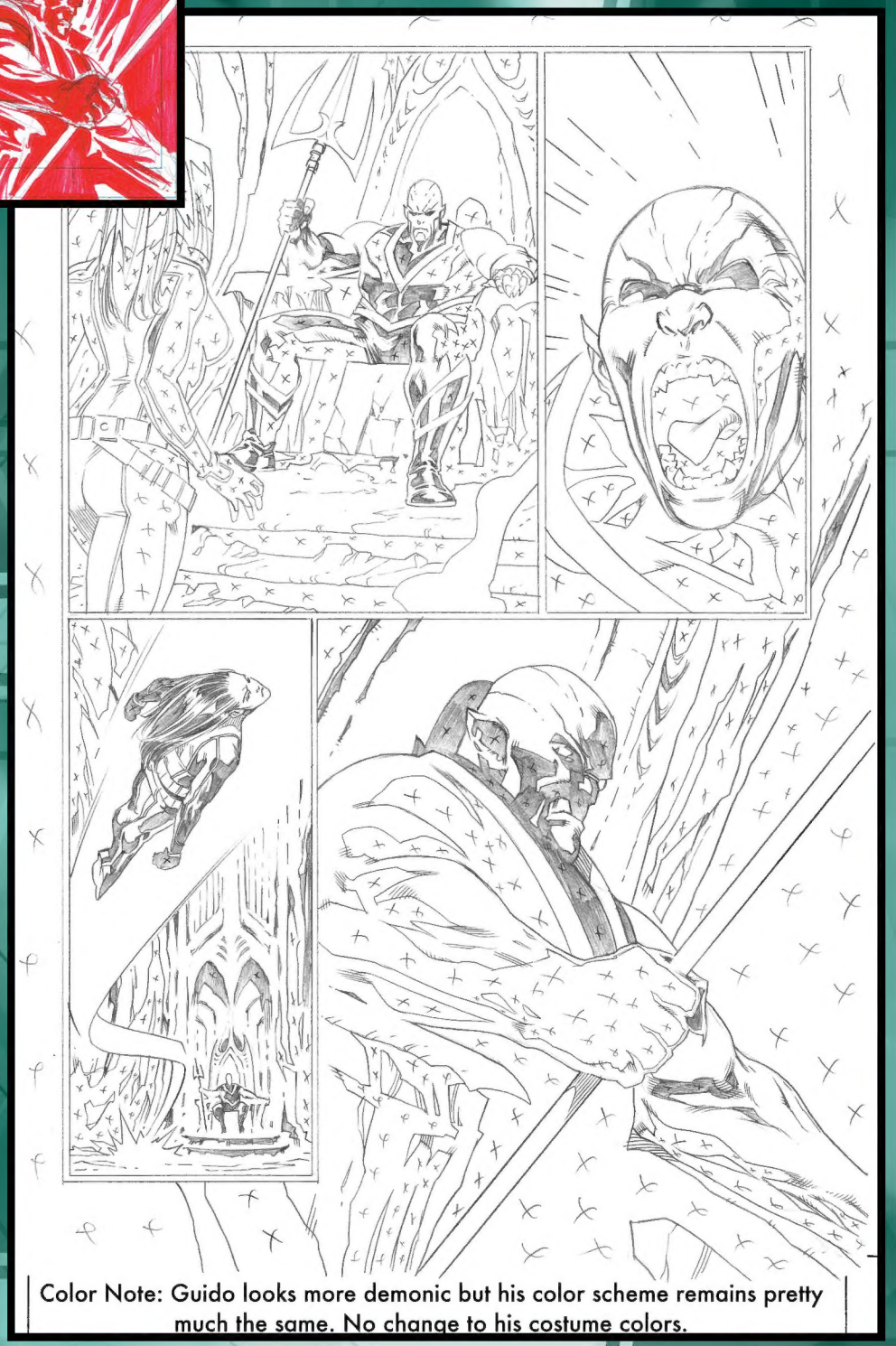
X-FACTOR
252

DEMON
MADROX

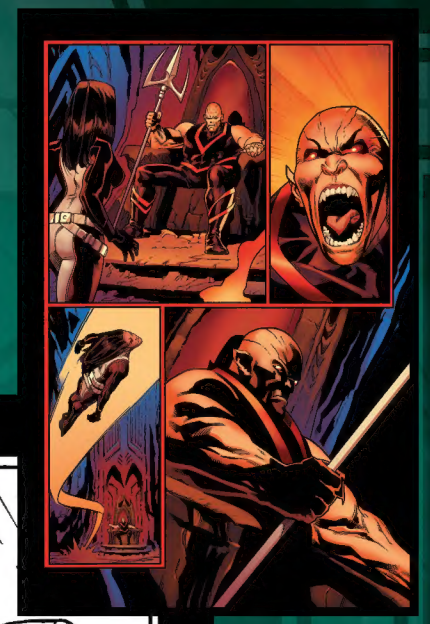
L. KIRK
2013

#255, Page 9 Art Process by
LEONARD KIRK, JAY LEISTEN & MATT MILLA

#256, Page 20 Art Process by LEONARD KIRK, JAY LEISTEN & MATT MILLA



Color Note: Guido looks more demonic but his color scheme remains pretty much the same. No change to his costume colors.



#250-251 Combined Covers by DAVID YARDIN

THE END OF X-FACTOR AS YOU KNOW IT!

The Lords of Hell battle for dominance in a vicious, mystical war triggered by the seven billionth soul born on Earth — Wolfsbane's son, Tier — and only X-Factor can prevent the entire world from going up in flames! Familiar faces return as the team fights for Tier's life and struggles to stop the Hell-Lords from tearing the planet apart — but help may come too late, as one Hell-Lord is poised to stand victorious. Despite a last-ditch effort to save the world, not all will survive the final battle!

T+

MARVEL

Collecting *X-Factor* #250-256, written by **Peter David** and illustrated by **Leonard Kirk**.